

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1195

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT CH
SUBJ: LEADERSHIP NOTES

REF: HONG KONG 5123

1. WHILE POLITBUREAU MEMBER/VICE PREMIER/PEKING MILITARY
REGION COMMANDER CHEN HSI-LIEN HAS RESUMED PROMIENT ACTIVITY
(REFTEL), SEVERAL OF HIS COLLEAGUES HAVE REMAINED UNACCOUNTABLY
INVISIBLE OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF WEEKS.

2. WU TEH. ALTHOUGH WU MAY BE WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES TO
SHORE UP HIS INCREASINGLY SHAKY POSITION AS FIRST PARTY SECRETARY
IN PEKING, IT IS AN OPEN SECRET THAT HE IS IN VERY PRECARIOUS
POLITICAL HEALTH. BRITISH EMBOFF SEEING OFF A CHINESE DELEGATION
RECENTLY REFERRED THREE TIMES -- SLOWLY AND DELIBERATELY -- TO
WU AS THE "FORMER" FIRST SECRETARY OF PEKING. NONE OF THE CHINESE
PRESENT FELT OBLIGED TO CORRECT HIM.

3. NI CHIH-FU. THE YOUNGEST POLITBUREAU MEMBER WHO SERVES
CONCURRENTLY AS SECOND PARTY SECRETARY IN BOTH PEKING AND
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SHANGHAI, NI HAD BEEN WIDELY SUSPECTED OF GANG OF FOUR
TIES OR SYMPATHIES OWING TO HIS ASSOCIATION WITH THE
GANG-CONTROLLED PEKING TRADE UNIONS AND WORKERS MILITIA.
AS RECENTLY AS LAST NOVEMBER, NI HOSTED A YUGOSLAV
TRADE UNION DELEGATION IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE
PEKING MUNICIPAL TRADE UNION COUNCIL. YET NI'S NAME
WAS CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT FROM THE LIST OF THOSE PRESENT

FOR A APRIL22-24 MEETING IN PEKING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ALL CHINA FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS WHICH SET OCTOBER AS THE DATE FOR CONVENING THE NINTH NATIONAL TRADE UNION CONGRESS. ALTHOUGH NI HAS BEEN SPARED POSTER ATTACK AND HAS INDEED BEEN HELD UP AS EXEMPLAR OF THE SUCCESSOR GENERATION, HIS RECENT INVISIBILITY RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS CURRENT POLITICAL STANDING.

4. YEH CHIEN-YING. ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS STANDING COMMITTEE AND HENCE DE FACTO CHIEF OF STATE, YEH MET BRIEFLY WITH THAI PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK BUT REMAINED OUT OF SIGHT THROUGHOUT THE VISIT BY SOMALI PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE IN MID-APRIL. THE PROTOCOL REQUIREMENT MAY SIMPLY HAVE BEEN WAIVED OWING TO YEH'S AGE AND FRAILTY. AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE INTRIGUED BY A JAPANESE EMBASSY REPORT (APPARENTLY BASED ON A KWANGTUNG PROVINCIAL BROADCAST PICKED UP AND REPORTED BY THE JAPANESE CONSULATE IN HONG KONG) THAT A "RECENT CANTON BROADCAST" LISTED THE PRC LEADERSHIP IN THE ORDER HUA, TENG, YEH INSTEAD OF THE STANDARD HUA, YEH, TENG RANKING. (COMMENT: USLO WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION WHICH ADDRESSEES MIGHT HAVE ON THIS BROADCAST.)
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